



A fine prospect of the Savoyard fortress of Montmélian

HOOGHE, Romeyn de.
 Arx et Oppidum Montismeliani.

Amsterdam: Adriaan Moetjens, 1697. Etching, 470 x 585mm.

£700

A prospect of Montmélian, a fortress guarding the strategic bridge over the Isère River, with an inset plan of the walls. In 1643 the writer Elie Brockenhoffer wrote: 'This is a beautiful fortress: the interior is spacious and well designed. [The walls] are thick and strong, fitted here and there with large bunkers. The lower or bottom box part is separated from the top and closed by a gate and a drawbridge that rises every night. The central part includes attics, cellars, stables, flashpoints, well and chapel, housing for the commander and the soldiers, who number 450, including 50 officers. The fort is well equipped with large and beautiful pieces of artillery'. Caught between France and Italy, Savoy suffered frequently: in 1690, during the Nine Years' War, Louis XIV invaded and captured Montmélian after a short siege, destroying the fortifications shown here. This plate was etched by Romeyn de Hooghe in 1675 and published in Jan Blaeu's Townbook of Savoy in 1682. A Dutch Old Master Etcher, de Hooghe is famous for the quality of his work, particularly the spectacular sea charts for Mortier's 'Atlas Maritime'. Here its quality is particularly apparent in the cartouche around the plan and key.



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